

Black History Month



Little Rock central High School: A Place of Determination

Little Rock Central High School, located in the heart of Little Rock, Arkansas, has a rich history. It was built in 1927 because there was a need for a larger school to handle the growing student population. It was originally called Little Rock Senior High School and became Little Rock Central High School in 1953.

The school is designed in the Collegiate Gothic and Art Deco style of architecture and was named “America’s Most Beautiful High School” by the American Institute of Architects. This type of architecture was used in the universities of Europe and is intended to evoke images of the seats of higher learning.

Despite its size, only white students attended Little Rock Central High School until 1957. In 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that it was unconstitutional to separate, or segregate, African-American and white students in educational facilities. This decision was called *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka* (KS). It is one of the most important court decisions in the history of civil rights in America.

Three years after the *Brown* decision, nine African-American students signed up to attend Little Rock Central High School. Hostilities arose over their admission and President Dwight D. Eisenhower was forced to use troops from the U.S. Army’s 101st Airborne Division to escort the nine students into school in September 1957. These students are remembered to history as the “Little Rock Nine.”



In May of 1958, the first African-American student graduated from Little Rock Central High School. His name was Ernest Green. As a result of the chaos during the 1957-1958 school year, Governor Orval Faubus signed a bill into law that closed Little Rock’s public high schools to prevent further desegregation efforts. This was called the “Lost Year,” and many high school students had to find schools in other parts of the state or other states to attend! The schools reopened in August of 1959.

In 1998, President Bill Clinton signed legislation designating the school as a National Historic Site because of its “role in the integration of public schools and the development of the Civil Rights Movement in the United States.” Today, Little Rock Central High School is the only operating high school in the nation to receive this designation.

Can you name these people?

a. would not sit at the
Back of the Bus in
Montgomery?

B. students entering Little Rock
Central High School in 1957?

C. founded Black History Month in 1926?

D. Little Rock junior high school named for this poet and author?

e. ex-slave who wrote a narrative of his life and was originally named
Frederick Bailey?

f. A cofounder of the National Association
for the Advancement of Colored People and author?

G. Gave speech at the March on Washington in 1963?

h. leader on the underground railroad?

i. Mentor to the Little Rock Nine?

j. lawyer who fought for civil rights and later became a U.S. Supreme
court judge?

Place your answers here:!

a. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

e. _____

f. _____

G. _____

h. _____

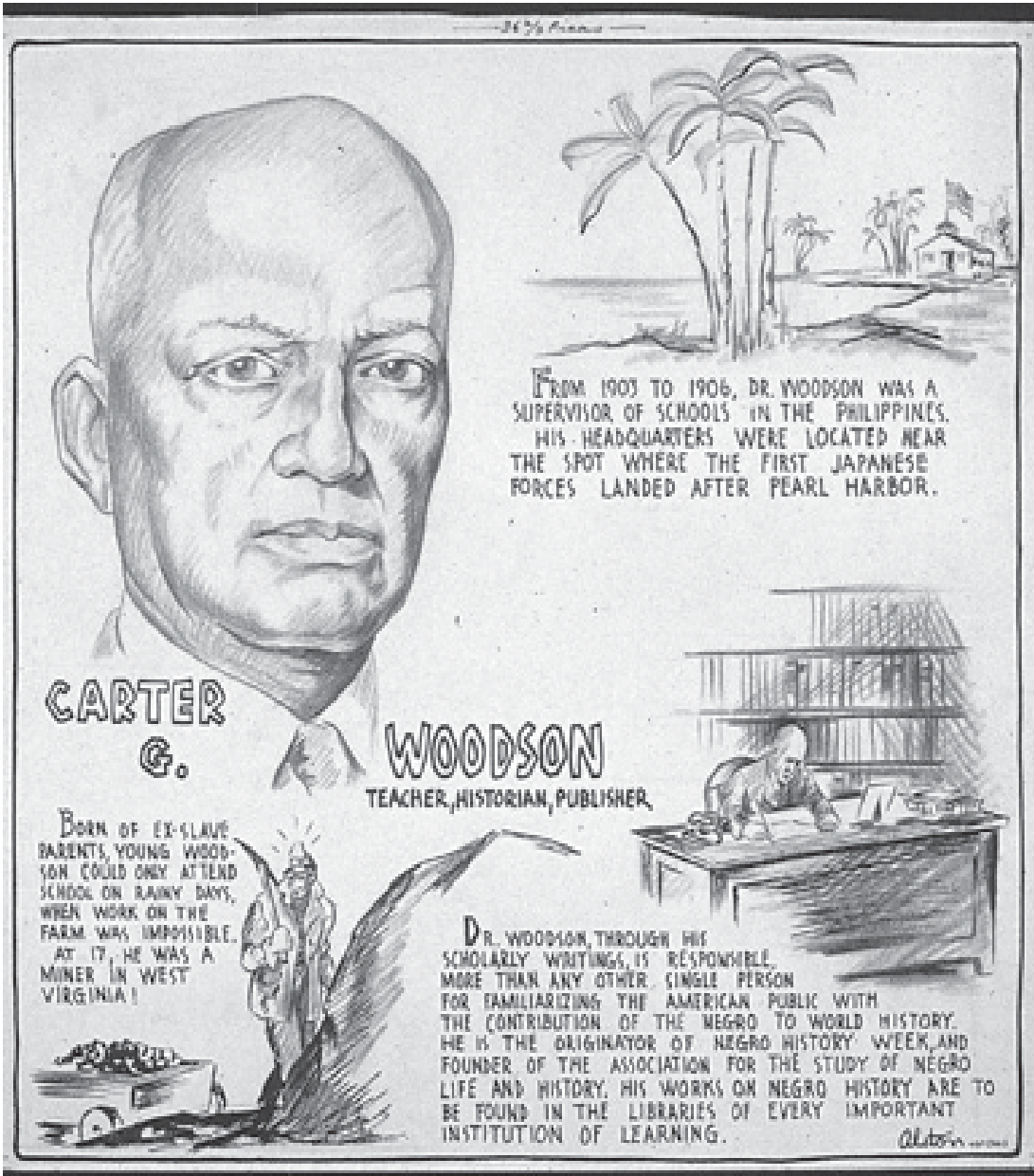
i. _____

j. _____

Answer key: a. Rosa Parks; b. the Little Rock Nine; c. Dr. Clarence Godwin Woodson; d. Paul
Laurence Dunbar; e. Frederick Douglass; f. W.E.B. DuBois; g. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; h. Harriet
Tubman; i. Patsy Bates; j. Thurgood Marshall.

What is Black History Month?

Black History Month was founded in 1926 by Dr. Clarence Godwin Woodson, founder of the Association for the Study of African-American Life and History (ASALH) at Howard University, a Historically Black University. February was chosen because emancipators Frederick Douglass and President Abraham Lincoln was born during this month. At first, it was named Negro History Week. In 1974, it was changed to Black History Week and in 1976 it was extended to Black History Month. Black History Month celebrates the accomplishments of African-Americans.



“Carter G. Woodson: Teacher, Historian, Publisher,” by Charles H. Austin (1943), Office of War Information, News Bureau, National Archives and Records Administration.

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The Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site (NHS) is celebrating the accomplishments of nine African-American students who faced great obstacles and angry mobs in September 1957 to desegregate Little Rock Central High School for Black History Month . Ranging in ages from 15 to 17, these teenagers showed an enormous amount of courage and are considered civil rights activists – meaning that they fought for the right for children in Little Rock to attend the school of their choice regardless of their race. Today, history remembers these students as the “Little Rock Nine.” Their actions showed the world that no matter how old you are, you can change the course of history by positive actions.

Who are the Little Rock Nine?

1. **Margaret Brown** was 16-years old when she walked into Central High School. During the school year, Brown was suspended after retaliating from the daily torment she received. In 1958, Brown moved to New York City to finish high school. She graduated from Southern Illinois University and moved to Canada. Recently, Brown moved back to Little Rock and is a freelance writer.

2. **Elizabeth Eckford** was 15-years old when she walked through a screaming mob at Central High School. A picture of her being harassed was taken and published across the world, illustrating the seriousness of desegregation in Little Rock. She attended college in the Midwest, served in the U.S. Army, and now resides in Little Rock. She has been honored by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), and the National Conference for Community and Justice for her contribution to promoting conflict resolution, understanding, and respect among races, religions, and cultures.

3. **Ernest Green** was the only senior among the Little Rock Nine in 1957. He had previously attended Horace Mann High School before entering Central at 16 and was the first African-American to graduate from the high school in May 1958. Green attended Michigan State University and served in President Jimmy Carter’s administration. His story was dramatized in the 1992 Disney television special, *The Ernest Green Story*. Today, he lives in Washington, D.C. and serves on several philanthropic boards.

4. **Thelma Mothershead** was born in 1940 and attended both Dunbar Junior High School and Horace Mann High School (all-black schools). She completed her junior year at Central High School and then had her diploma mailed to her after she took correspondence courses and summer school in St. Louis. She attended Southern Illinois University (Carbondale and Edwardsville) and was an educator in the East St. Louis school system for 28 years. Today, she lives in Little Rock, Arkansas.

5. **Neola Pattillo** was 15-years old when she entered Central High School in 1957. Her mother was one of the first African-Americans to attend the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. After the 1957 school year, Pattillo moved to California to continue her education. She attended college in California before working as a reporter for NBC and today serves as a communications consultant. Pattillo wrote of her experiences in the acclaimed *Warriors Don’t Cry*, which won the 1995 Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Book Award and the American Library Association Notable Book Award. She currently lives in California.

6. **Gloria Ray** was 15-years old when she attended Central High School in 1957. She worked for a Dutch Company and was a publisher of a European computer magazine . She resides in the Netherlands.



7. **Terrence Roberts** also attended Dunbar Junior High School and Horace Mann High School before entering Central High School in 1957. As a result of the closing of Little Rock’s high schools during the 1958-1959 school year, Roberts continued his education in California. He attended California State University, UCLA, and Southern Illinois University, where he received his Ph.D. in psychology. Today, he resides in California and has a management consulting firm.

8. **Jefferson Thomas** was the youngest of seven children and attended Dunbar Junior High School, where he was the president of the student council and outstanding track athlete. He entered Central High School at the age of 15 and graduated in 1960 with Carlotta Walls. Today, he resides in Ohio and works for the U.S. Department of Defense.

9. **Carlotta Walls** attended the all-black Stephens Elementary and Dunbar Junior High School. At 14- years old, she was the youngest of the nine to attend Central High School. She graduated from the school in 1960 and attended college in Michigan and Colorado. Today, Walls lives in Colorado and owns a real estate brokerage firm. She is active in many community organizations, such as the Colorado AIDS project, the Urban League, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). She is dedicated to ensuring educational opportunities for African-American students and was honored for these efforts by the NAACP and the National Dunbar Alumni Association.

10. **The Mentor – Daisy L. Gatson Bates** was the mentor to the Little Rock Nine during the 1957 crisis. She was born and raised in Arkansas, where she became the president of the Arkansas State Conference of Branches of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and co-publisher of the *Arkansas State Press* with her husband, L.C. Bates. As a result, she and her husband were called the “two of the most radical people in Arkansas.”

Bates’ role in the 1957 crisis was as a counselor to the Little Rock Nine. The students met at her house to discuss strategy and followed her advice for attending school. For her role in the crisis, Bates received threats and a bomb was even set off at her house.

After the crisis, Bates wrote a book, *The Long Shadow of Little Rock*, joined the Democratic National Committee during the Kennedy - Johnson administration, and created a self- help program for senior citizens in Mitchellville, Arkansas. In 1984, she restarted the *Arkansas State Press* and served as its advisor after she sold the paper in the late 1980s.

Over her lifetime, she received over 200 honors, including those from major universities, the Harriet Tubman Award, the NAACP Spingarn Medal, the Delta Sigma Theta’s First Annual Mary Church Terrell Award, and many others. She is listed in “Who’s Who in American Women” and was named “One of the Top 9 News Personalities of the World in 1957.” Bates was also listed as “Outstanding Citizen of the Year” by the National Council of Negro Women in 1957, and was the first woman to address the Massachusetts State Senate. She was named by the *Arkansas Gazette* as one of the 100 most influential persons in Arkansas history, and has had an elementary school named in her honor.

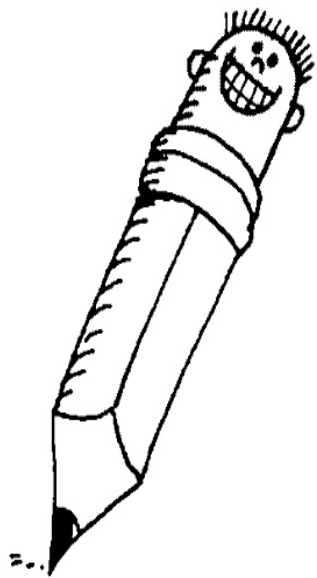
Bates died in 1999 and in 2000, the City of Little Rock changed the name of 14th Street to Daisy L. Gatson Bates Drive in her honor (the street runs beside Central High School). Her home is also listed as a National Historic Landmark for her contributions to the Civil Rights Movement.

Photo: The Little Rock Nine in 1957 with their mentor, Daisy Bates. Courtesy of the Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site, Little Rock, AR.

Tolerance and Diversity

Embrace It All Year Long!

Why do we celebrate Black History Month, Women's History Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, Native American History Month, and others at only certain times of the year? Shouldn't we, as Americans, recognize the diversity of our country throughout the year, as well as maintain tolerance and respect for our differences and similarities? After all, embracing people of different nationalities, religious backgrounds, and ethnicities is a characteristic of a democracy like the United States, as is social equality and respect for the individual within a community. Commit to learning more and practicing tolerance and diversity this year by taking part in the following class ceremony, using the following pledge from the Southern Poverty Law Center:



To fulfill my pledge, _____, I will examine my own biases and work to overcome them set a positive example for my family and friends work for tolerance in my own community speak out against hate and injustice.

We Share A World

For all our differences, we share one world. To be tolerant is to welcome the differences and delight in the sharing.

Remember: Tolerance is a personal decision that comes from a belief that every person is a treasure. America's diversity is its strength. Ignorance, insensitivity and bigotry can turn that diversity into a source of prejudice and discrimination.

To help keep diversity a wellspring of strength and make America a better place for all, pledge to have respect for people whose abilities, beliefs, culture, race, sexual identity or other characteristics are different from your own.

MIX IT UP AT LUNCH!

On Tuesday, November 16, 2004, more than 3 million students at nearly 8,000 schools around the country participated in the 3rd annual *Mix It Up at Lunch Day*. They stepped out of their comfort zones to meet someone new. The good news is, you can organize a Mix It Up at Lunch Day at your school any day! Go for it - meet someone new at your own Mix It Up at Lunch Day.

Follow the steps listed on the right to organize your own *Mix It Up at Lunch Day*!

- * **Organize** -pull together a group of students who also want to challenge the social boundaries at school and form a planning committee.
- * Invite students from school clubs, groups and sports teams to help plan the day. Just because a person belongs to one group, doesn't mean they have an easier time bridging the divides.

DID YOU KNOW?
Every hour ... someone commits a hate crime.
Every day ... at least eight blacks, three whites, three gays, three Jews and one Latino become hate crime victims.
Every week ... a cross is burned.

- * Schedule a meeting with the school principal and explain how *Mix It Up at Lunch* will benefit the school. Ask to add the day to the school calendar.
- * Make an announcement at a faculty meeting and ask teachers to support the day by using some of the *Mix It Up* classroom activities (<http://www.tolerance.org>).
- * Start early! Set a meeting schedule and stick to it. Brainstorm ideas about how to make the day work at your school. Divide up the tasks that need to get done and check in with each other regularly.
- * Put up posters around school and give away stickers.
- * If you have a school paper, ask them to do an article to build buzz.
- * Send e-cards to all club and student leaders.
- * Closer to the day, start making announcements over the PA.
- * Know ahead of time how you'll help people *Mix It Up*. Be creative and have some fun! Here are some ideas that have worked well to for other folks:
 - * Group people at tables based on birth month.
 - * Give away a free snack - size candy bar as people enter the cafeteria. Ask them to sit at the table that matches their candy bar.
 - * Randomly assign colors or numbers as people enter the cafeteria. They sit at the table with the same color or number.
- * **Debrief** - bring the planning committee back together to celebrate and to evaluate how things went. Discuss what worked well and what didn't. Share your experience with us and teens around the country at Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site and Teaching Tolerance (<http://www.tolerance.org>).

Things You Can Do to Promote Tolerance:

- Attend a play, listen to music or go to a dance performance by artists whose race or ethnicity is different from your own.
- Volunteer at a local social services organization.
- Attend services at a variety of churches, synagogues, mosques and temples to learn about different faiths.
- Visit a local senior citizens center and collect oral histories. Donate large - print reading materials and books on tape. Offer to help with a craft project.
- Shop at ethnic grocery stores and specialty markets. Get to know the owners. Ask about their family histories.
- Participate in a diversity program.
- Ask a person of another cultural heritage to teach you how to perform a traditional dance or cook a traditional meal.
- Learn sign language.
- Take a conversation course in another language that is spoken in your community.
- Teach an adult to read.
- Speak up when you hear slurs. Let people know that bias speech is always unacceptable.
- Imagine what your life might be like if you were a person of another race, gender or sexual orientation. How might “today” have been different?
- Take a civil rights history vacation. Tour key sites and museums.
- Research your family history. Share information about your heritage in talks with others.
- List all the stereotypes you can — positive and negative — about a particular group. Are these stereotypes reflected in your actions?
- Think about how you appear to others. List personality traits that are compatible with tolerance (e.g., compassion, curiosity, openness). List those that seem incompatible with tolerance (e.g., jealousy, bossiness, perfectionism).
- Create a “diversity profile” of your friends, coworkers and acquaintances. Set the goal of expanding it by next year.
- Sign the *Declaration of Tolerance* (page four) and return it to:

The National Campaign for Tolerance
400 Washington Avenue
Montgomery, AL 36104
- Read a book or watch a movie about another culture.

Quote for the Year:

“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is: ‘What are you doing for others?’”

— Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Things Your Teacher Can Do to Promote Tolerance In the Classroom:

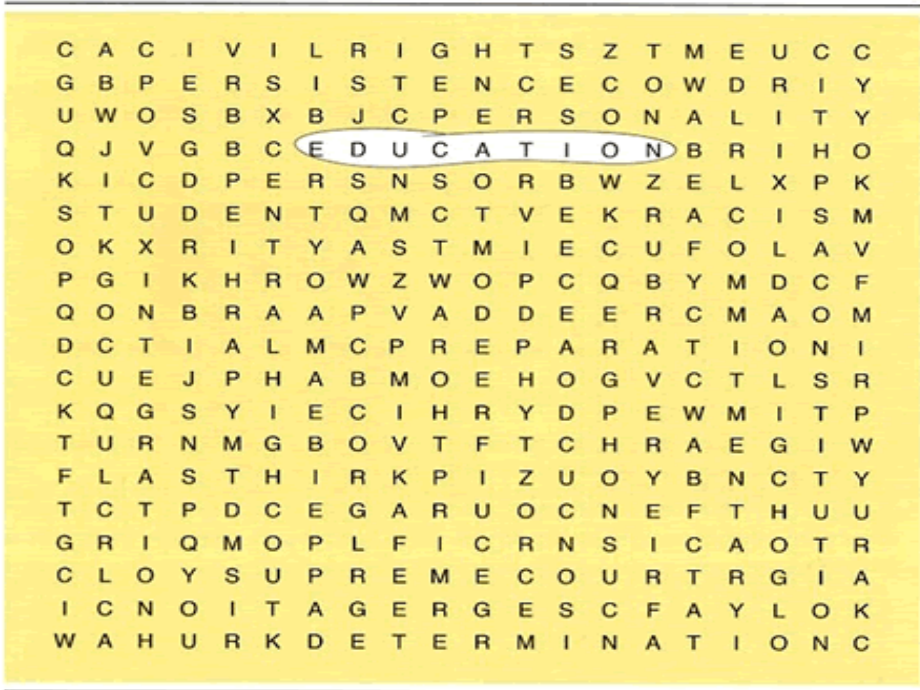
- Donate tolerance-related books, films, magazines and other materials to school libraries. Organize a book drive.
- Buy art supplies for a local school. Sponsor a mural about the cultural composition and heritage of your community.
- Volunteer to be an advisor for a student club. Support a wide range of extracurricular activities to help students “find their place” at school.
- Coach a girls’ sports team. Encourage schools to provide equal resources for boys’ and girls’ athletics.
- Sponsor a conflict resolution team.
- Ask school counselors what resources they have for supporting gay and lesbian youth. Offer additional materials if necessary.
- Assess your school’s compliance with the accessibility requirements of the *Americans with Disabilities Act*. Organize a class project to improve compliance.
- Donate a tape recorder to a school that is conducting oral history projects. Suggest a focus on local struggles for civil rights.
- Start a pen pal program. Get students in touch with people in different parts of the community, country or world.
- Applaud the other team. Promote good sportsmanship and ban taunting.
- Encourage schools to go beyond the “heroes and holidays” model to develop a rich, ongoing multicultural curriculum.
- Give *Teaching Tolerance* materials to educators in your community. (<http://www.tolerance.org>).
- Provide confidential methods for students to report harassment or bullying.
- Encourage school administrators to adopt Internet-use policies that address on-line hate, harassment and pornography.
- Discourage the use of divisive school emblems.
- Ensure that schools comply with the *McKinney Act*, the federal law mandating educational services for homeless children.
- Create a bilingual (or multilingual) calendar highlighting school and community activities.
- Invite bilingual students to give morning greetings and announcements on the PA system in their home languages.
- Make sure that school cafeterias offer options for students and staff with dietary restrictions.
- Celebrate “Someone Special Day” instead of Mother’s Day or Father’s Day. Keep adoptive and foster students in mind when planning family-oriented programs.
- Ask schools not to schedule tests or school meetings on the major holidays of any religious group. Develop a school calendar that respects religious diversity.

Word Search

Find the following words that relate to the Central High School Crisis of 1957.

- ✓ Education
Bravery
Courage
Racism
Determination
Persistence
Constitution
Supreme Court
- Civil Rights
Central High
Commitment
Student
Ambition
Personality
Preparation
Opportunity
- Equality
Justice
Segregation
Integration
Law
Freedom
Liberty

See if you can
fill these
puzzles about
LR Central High
School out!



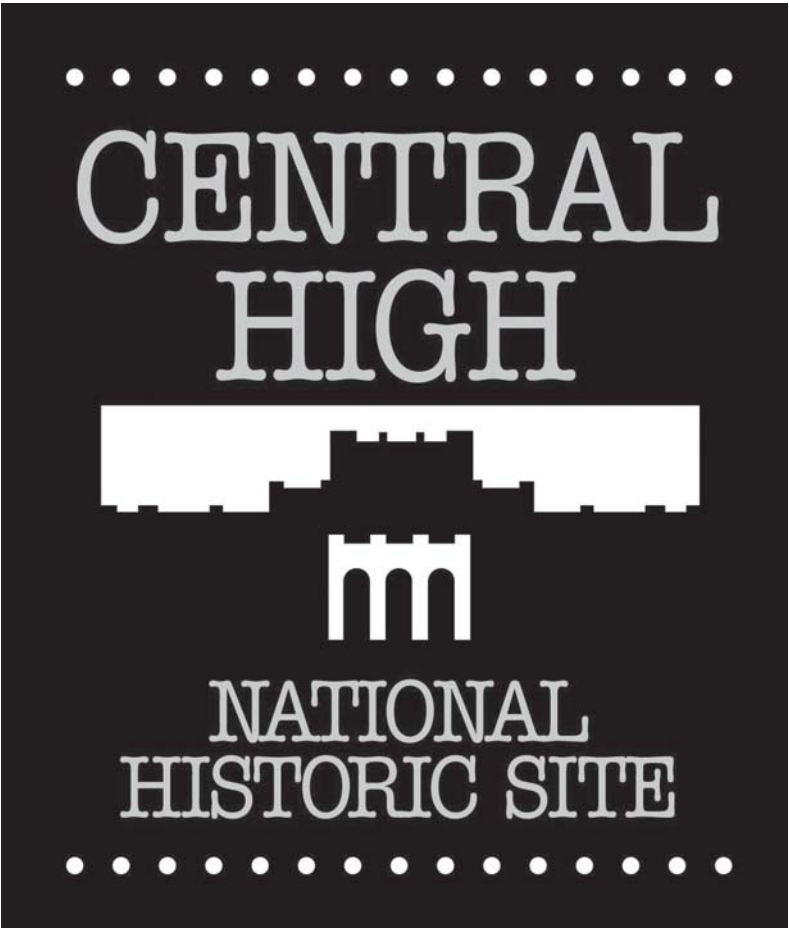
Fill in the Blank

1. The Declaration of Independence declares that all _____ are created _____.
2. The Fourteenth Amendment guaranteed all citizens equal rights under the law and outlawed _____.
3. *Plessy v. Ferguson* declared that _____ facilities based on race were constitutional as long as they were equal.
4. The _____ Amendment declared all persons born in the United States were legal citizens.
5. _____ laws promoted racial prejudice and segregation.
6. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People fought against _____.
7. The Little Rock School Board began to desegregate its schools in _____ at Central High School.
8. _____ was governor of Arkansas at the time of the 1957 crisis at Central High School.
9. _____ African-American students were enrolled to attend Central High school in 1957.
10. Governor Orval Faubus used the Arkansas _____ to prevent the nine African-American students from entering Central High School.
11. _____ was president during the Central High School crisis.
12. The _____ formed to reopen Little Rock's high schools during the 1958-59 school year.
13. Elementary schools in Little Rock were _____ in 1968.
14. The Central High School crisis received national attention because of _____ coverage.



Answers to Fill In The Blank: 1) men, equal; 2) discrimination; 3) separate; 4) 14th; 5) Jim Crow; 6) segregation; 7) 1957; 8) Orval Faubus; 9) Nine; 10) National Guard; 11) Dwight D. Eisenhower; 12) Women's Emergency Committee to Open Schools; 13) integrated; 14) media.

HOW TO CONTACT US!



Little Rock Central High School
National Historic Site
2125 Daisy L. Gatson Bates Drive
Little Rock, Arkansas 72202

For special tours or information,
call (501) 374-1957

Hours of Operation:
Monday-Saturday: 9:30a.m. - 4p.m.
Sunday: 1:00p.m. - 4:30p.m.

Closed Thanksgiving,
Christmas Day, and New Year's Day

Become a Junior Ranger!

Anyone between the ages of 9 and 12 can become a Junior Ranger at the Central High School National Historic Site! It's easy and fun to do! Visit the historic site and fill out the Junior Ranger Booklet!



Arkansas...

Did you know???

- Population in 2000: 2,600,000+**
- Largest City: Little Rock (followed By Fort Smith)**
- Oldest Organized settlement: Arkansas Post (1686)**
- Major Rivers: Arkansas, White, Ouachita, Red, and the Mississippi River**
- Counties: 75**
- Capitol City: Little Rock, Pulaski County**
- Date of statehood: 1836 (sister state with Michigan)**
- First Desegregated schools: Fayetteville High School (1954), Hoxie High School (1955), Charleston Schools (1954), Little Rock Central High School (1957)**
- see "x's" over the counties at right.**